

THE COST

OF GUN VIOLENCE

THE DIRECT COST TO TAXPAYERS

Louisville is the hometown of the world's most famous boxer, Muhammad Ali; the city is known for the Kentucky Derby, baseball bats, fried chicken, and bourbon. Unfortunately, the city has recently also become known as the place where the Breonna Taylor tragedy occurred, and like many other cities across the country, has suffered from a spike in gun violence since the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Louisville is a large city with more than 600,000 residents and nearly 400 square miles; the population is 66% White, 24% Black, 6% Latino, and 3% Asian¹. As with the national trend, violence in the city disproportionately affects the Black community, with 76% of all homicide victims this year being Black as of July 11, 2021.² The city reached a grave milestone of having the most homicides in its history in 2020, with 173³, and as of July 11, 2021, there has been a 63% increase in homicides since the same time last year.

While most shootings and homicides involve young Black men, the age is older than many assume. Through the first half

of 2021, 63% of all homicide suspects were between the age of 25-44 and only four suspects were juveniles.⁴

Louisville also benefits from a number of gun violence reduction programs and strategies that have received national recognition. The city was among the first cities in the country to create a local government agency dedicated to violence prevention with the launch of the Office of Safe & Healthy Neighborhoods (OSHN) in 2013. OSHN works to address violence from its roots to its fruit by working collaboratively with and within priority communities to develop and deploy strategies for violence prevention and intervention that are comprehensive, socially just, evidence-based, and grounded in the public health approach. In late 2020, the city also launched a new Group Violence Intervention program, using a mix of law enforcement and social services known as Focused Deterrence to reduce gang violence.

When someone is shot in Louisville, as in jurisdictions throughout the country, there is an immediate, multifaceted, and very expensive response from an array of government agencies. The Louisville Fire Department dispatches EMTs, government

contracted ambulances respond, the Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) and sometimes additional policing agencies descend on the scene, investigators from the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney often arrive, and, if the victim/s are declared dead on the scene, the coroner is called. All of this stems from just the shooting scene itself. In non-fatal shootings and many homicides, immediately following is a hospitalization often paid for by tax dollars, and in the case of serious injury, rehabilitation. Victim compensation is often provided. There is protracted investigation by LMPD and the Commonwealth's Attorney, who are sometimes joined by the US Attorney's Office.

Most often there is a trial and a long incarceration period. When there are multiple victims and/or multiple suspects, these efforts multiply for even a single shooting incident. These are just some of the costs of each injury shooting and homicide in Louisville. The National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) conducted a detailed analysis of the Cost of Gun Violence in Louisville. NICJR tracked the direct costs of each shooting and has deliberately used low end range estimates for each expense. Additionally, not included in this assessment are productivity losses relating to victim(s) or suspect(s) who were working at the time of the shooting.

1 U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: Louisville/ Jefferson County (balance), Kentucky

2 2021 Homicide Weekly Report 7-11-21.xlsm (louisville-police.org)

3 Louisville violence: 173 homicides and few answers in record year (courier-journal.com)

4 2021 Homicide Weekly Report 7-11-21.xlsm (louisville-police.org)

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Nationally, those costs have been estimated at an additional \$1 million - \$2 million for each shooting incident. Therefore, the calculated per homicide shooting cost of \$900,000 in Louisville is a conservative estimate; the real cost is likely even higher.

Each shooting homicide in Louisville costs taxpayers \$900K

In the past five years, Louisville has had an approximate average of 116 homicides which result in an annual expense to taxpayers of more than \$104.4 million.

If Louisville could further reduce its gun violence rate by just 20%, that would result in a combined government savings of \$ 62.8 million every year.

Officials in Louisville and Jefferson County should consider even greater upfront investments in gun violence reduction efforts. Additional investments in effective intervention strategies would yield significant reductions in shootings, save lives and produce massive savings.



1

CRIME SCENE RESPONSE

The response to a severe injury shooting or homicide scene usually includes a heavy police presence, Fire/EMT response, along with medical transport. According to officials with the Louisville Metro Police Department, up to 15 officers, including Patrol, Homicide Unit, and other supervisory level officers, respond to a typical homicide shooting.

2

HOSPITAL & REHABILITATION

Once a victim has been transported to the hospital, the cost of the Trauma Unit, surgery, and rehabilitation, are exorbitant. Costs can range from \$50k to \$179k per incident. With more than 2/3 of gunshot victims either uninsured or on Kentucky Medicaid, the Cost of Violence includes a tremendous strain on the County's hospital network.

3

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

Police investigation, a trial or court process that includes prosecution and defense costs, and court staff, make up the many costs of the court process in injury shooting and homicide cases. Due to the consequences of a homicide conviction, these cases often go to trial. Sometimes these cases involve multiple suspects with multiple court dates and separate trials. From the time of arrest, court proceedings in an injury shooting or homicide case can take two years.

4

INCARCERATION

Incarceration accounts for a large portion of the costs once a suspect is arrested. A stay in the Louisville Department of Corrections Jail system costs on average \$63 per day. Suspects can remain in the County system for two years until trial, sentencing, and placement into the State prison system. The Kentucky State prison system costs \$80 per day per day; incarceration costs of individuals convicted of attempted murder or homicide range from \$297k to over \$517k.

5

VICTIM SUPPORT

The majority of these costs are covered by Kentucky's Victim Compensation program. Costs can range from \$21k to \$38k per victim, and include burial expenses, lost wages for a year, medical expenses, and counseling. Other costs in this category include County services, including social services and autopsy costs, and the longterm cost of families losing a financial contributor.

6

LOST TAX REVENUE

Kentucky has a State Income Tax of 5% along with a Sales Use tax of 6%. When an injury shooting or homicide occurs, the State and counties lose the ability to collect taxes (both income and sales tax) from the incarcerated individuals and homicide victims. Each incident can represent lost tax revenue of a minimum of two individuals, from 10 to 20 years.

POPULATION

617,638

114 92 89



2017 2018 2019

HOMICIDES

49% 48% 48%



2017 2018 2019

HOMICIDE CLEARANCE

POLICE FORCE Louisville Metro PD

1,199

328 312



2018 2019

INJURY SHOOTINGS

SOURCE: Louisville Metro Police Department

The Cost Per Shooting

The true governmental cost of gun violence to the city, County and State.

NICJR
National Institute for
Criminal Justice Reform

LOUISVILLE
KENTUCKY



OFFICE FOR
SAFE AND HEALTHY
NEIGHBORHOODS

Homicide Cost

CRIME SCENE

\$9,300

\$3,000 Police Response

\$2,500 Scene Cleanup

\$3,800 Fire/EMT

HOSPITAL

\$62,350

\$5,100 EMR/Trauma Center

\$57,250 Gunshot Surgery

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

\$134,800

\$10,800 Police Investigation

\$117,200 DA & Public Defender

\$6,800 Court Process

INCARCERATION

\$573,190

\$45,990 Pre-Trial Incarceration

\$527,200 Prison Placement

VICTIM SUPPORT

\$38,000

\$2,200 Coroner's Office

\$17,300 Victim of Crimes

\$18,500 Receiving Social
Service Benefits
(one year support for two families)

LOST REVENUE

\$82,600

\$82,600 Sales Tax Revenue
(both suspect & murder victim)

\$900,240
Per **Homicide**
Shooting

per one
suspect

Injury Shooting Cost

CRIME SCENE

\$8,900

\$2,600 Police Response

\$2,500 Scene Cleanup

\$3,800 Fire/EMT

HOSPITAL

\$157,255

\$5,100 EMR/Trauma Center

\$114,405 Gunshot Surgery

\$37,750 Rehabilitation

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

\$18,140

\$540 Police Investigation

\$16,700 DA & Public Defender

\$900 Court Process

INCARCERATION

\$280,290

\$45,990 Pre-Trial Incarceration

\$234,300 Prison Placement

VICTIM SUPPORT

\$21,550

\$12,300 Victim of Crimes

\$9,250 Receiving Social
Service Benefits
(one year support for one family)

LOST REVENUE

\$22,700

\$22,700 Sales Tax Revenue

\$508,835

Per **Injury**
Shooting

per one
suspect



total cost
based on
two suspects
\$1.8M
per **homicide** shooting

total cost
based on
two suspects
\$1M
per **injury** shooting



Data Sources

LOUISVILLE
KENTUCKY



OFFICE FOR
SAFE AND HEALTHY
NEIGHBORHOODS

CRIME SCENE	Subject:	Police Response	Fire/EMT Transport	Scene Clean Up
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Response from LMPD Homicide UnitCity of Louisville Employee Salaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Louisville Fire DepartmentLouisville Emergency Medical Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Archangels BioRecovery Inc.AfterDeath Cleaning
	Notes	Initial police response to a homicide scene typically includes 6 Patrol, 1 Lieutenant, 2 Sergeants, and 6 Detectives. They remain on-scene between 2-6 hours. Initial police response to an injury shooting scene typically includes 6 Patrol, 1 Sergeant, and 2 Detectives.They remain on-scene between 2-6 hours.	Fire & EMT Budget = \$159.6 Million Total Responses = 42,000 Average cost per response = \$3,800	Average cost among competitive vendors to clean up crime scenes involving blood = \$2,500
HOSPITAL	Subject:	ER/ Surgery for Gun-Shot Victim		
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2017 John Hopkins Study: A retrospective analysis was performed using data from the Nationwide Emergency Department Sample of the Healthcare Cost and Utilization Project.		
	Notes	Average cost of gun-shot victims treated and released the same day = \$5,100 (ER base cost) Average cost of gun-shot victims requiring surgery and hospital stay = \$114,405 (surgery cost) Average cost of gun-shot victims who required surgery, a hospital stay, and were released to rehabilitation centers = \$179,600 (ER cost, surgery & rehabilitation cost) Formula for this study: (Base cost + surgery cost * 1/3 of surgey cost) = \$157,297 per shooting victim requiring surgery and rehabilitation. <ul style="list-style-type: none">1/2 of all homicide victims receive surgery before they die, so we use \$57,250 to represent half of all homicide victims		
CRIMINAL JUSTICE	Subject:	Police Investigation	DA & Public Defender	Court Process
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Comparative interviews with police departments across the nation.Jefferson County Employees Salary Schedule	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Estimates of Time Spent in Capital and Non Capital Murder CasesJefferson County District AttorneyState of Kentucky Public Defender	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Review of Kentucky Judicial branch salaries
	Notes	Investigations typically can extend over a two year period. An average of 20 hours is spent on attempted murder cases and 400 hours for homicides cases. <ul style="list-style-type: none">\$27/hr (2 Detectives) x 10 hours = \$540\$27/hr (2 Detectives) x 200 hours = \$10,800	1087 hours to defend & prosecute a murder case x \$77 (DA \$46/hr + PD \$31/hr) = \$83,699 + 40% overhead = \$117,178 To defend an attempted murder case requires 1/7 of the time = \$16,717	Combined hourly rates of the following staff: Judge,Bailiff, Research Attorney, Court Reporter, Clerk = \$154 per hour. \$154 x 44 hours (murder case) = \$6,776 \$154 x 6 hours (A felony) = \$924
INCARCERATION	Subject:	Pre-Trial Incarceration	State Prison (Attempted Murder)	State Prison (Murder Case)
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Louisville Metro Department of Corrections GF BudgetLouisville Metro Department of Corrections Fact Sheet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Kentucky Department of Corrections	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Kentucky Department of CorrectionsKentucky Legislative Research Commission
	Notes	Louisville Metro Department of Corrections Budget \$55.6 million Average Daily Population = 2,407 Average Daily Cost Per Inmate: \$63/day Average 2 year period of pre-trial incarceration in the county upon sentencing and placement into State Prison.\$63/day x 2 years = \$45,990	Kentucky Department of Corrections annual cost to house an adult is \$29,287 Convictions involving injury shootings serve an average of 10 years in state prison, subtracting pretrial 'time-served' in the County jail. (\$29,287x10 years) - 2 years = \$234,296	Annual cost of \$29,287 to incarcerate an adult in the Kentucky state prison system. Average inmate serves 20 years for murder, minus time served. (\$29,287x 20 years) - 2 years = \$527,166
VICTIM SUPPORT	Subject:	Victim of Crimes	Social Service Assistance	Medical Examiner's Office
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Kentucky Crime Victims Reparation Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">USDA SNAP eligibility award = \$262 for family of 3Kentucky TANF award = \$509 for family of 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Jefferson County Coroner's OfficeJefferson County Coroner Budget
	Notes	Homicide Victim: \$5,000 for burial expenses \$150/w x 1 year = \$7,800 for victim lost wages \$4,500 for family grief counseling Total = \$17,300 Injury Shooting Victim: \$150/wk loss wages (1 year) = \$7,800 \$4,500 mental health Total = \$12,300	When a victim is shot, many can't return to work immediately. Since the victim and perpetrator may be a major financial contributor to the household, many families may need to apply for social services support. The estimate for this study is for 1 year of Social Service assistance. (\$771/mo x 12 months) x 2 families = \$18,504	Jefferson County FY 20 Coroner's Budget was \$2.6 million. The Jefferson County Coroner conducted 484 autopsies in FY20. The cost per autopsy =\$5,154
LOST REVENUE	Subject:	Lost Tax Revenue (One person going to jail)	Lost Tax Revenue (Murder: Loss Revenue for 2 people)	
	Source	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2020 Income and Sales Tax	<ul style="list-style-type: none">2020 Income and Sales Tax	
	Notes	State income tax= 5% Sales & Use tax= 6%. If person earns 30k/year, then total income tax = \$1,500. If person spends 1/3 of income, then total sales tax = \$565. Total combined tax = \$2,065/yr But if person has to serve a 10 years sentence for attempted murder, then (\$2,065 x 10 years) = \$20,650 of missed combined tax revenue. If shooting victim doesn't work for one year, then an additional \$2,065 of lost revenue is added. Total Lost Sales Tax Revenue = \$22,715	State income tax= 5% State/Local Sales tax= 6%. If person earns 30k/year, then total income tax = \$1,500. If person spends 1/3 of income, then total sales tax = \$565. Total combined tax = \$2,065/yr Average murder sentence is 20 years; combined revenue loss for victim and perpetrator is at least \$82,600(\$2,065 x 20 years x 2 people)	